

Introduction

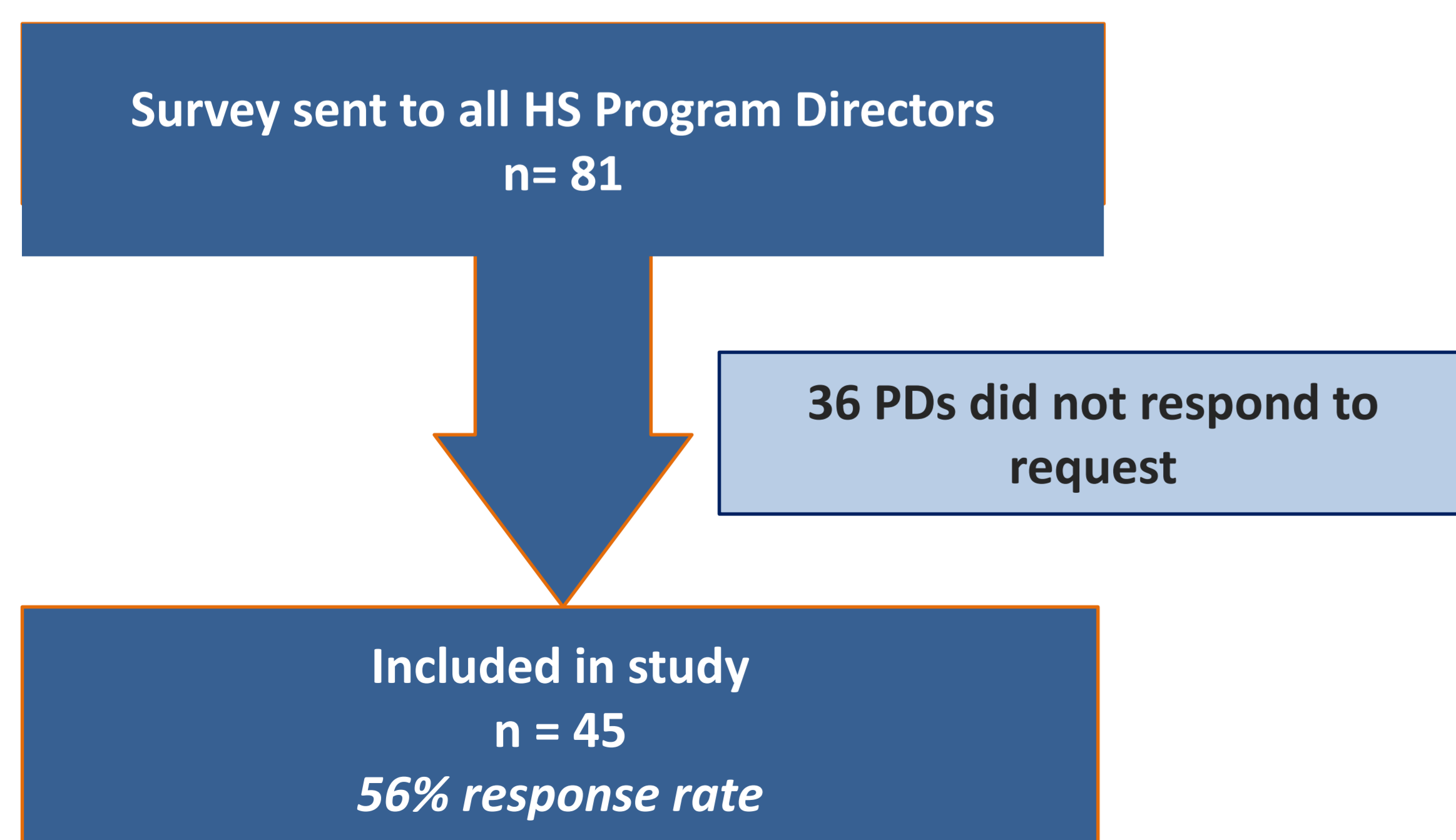
Sub-specialty fellowships are available for those who wish to attain additional training after the completion of plastic surgery residency. While candidate requirements and characteristics desirable for plastic surgery residency are well established, those for hand surgery fellowship training still remain unclear, as no data is available in the literature.

Aims

Provide information on some of the criteria that are used to select and rank applicants for Hand surgery fellowships in the United States. This data would be of value to both medical students and residents planning careers in hand surgery, and can help hand surgery fellowship program directors see what other fellowship directors perceive as being important factors.

Methods

A 38-question survey was sent in April 2015 to all ACGME-recognized hand surgery fellowship program directors (n=81). The survey investigated the importance of a variety of factors used for selection and ranking of applicants, including medical school and residency training, research experience, fellowship interview, and candidate characteristics. A 5-point Likert scale was used to grade thirty-three factors from 1 (not at all important in making my decision) to 5 (essential in making my decision); or for five controversial factors from 1 (very negative impact in making my decision) to 5 (very positive impact in making my decision). 42 Program Directors responded (56%). The data was analyzed from the responses, and are presented here.

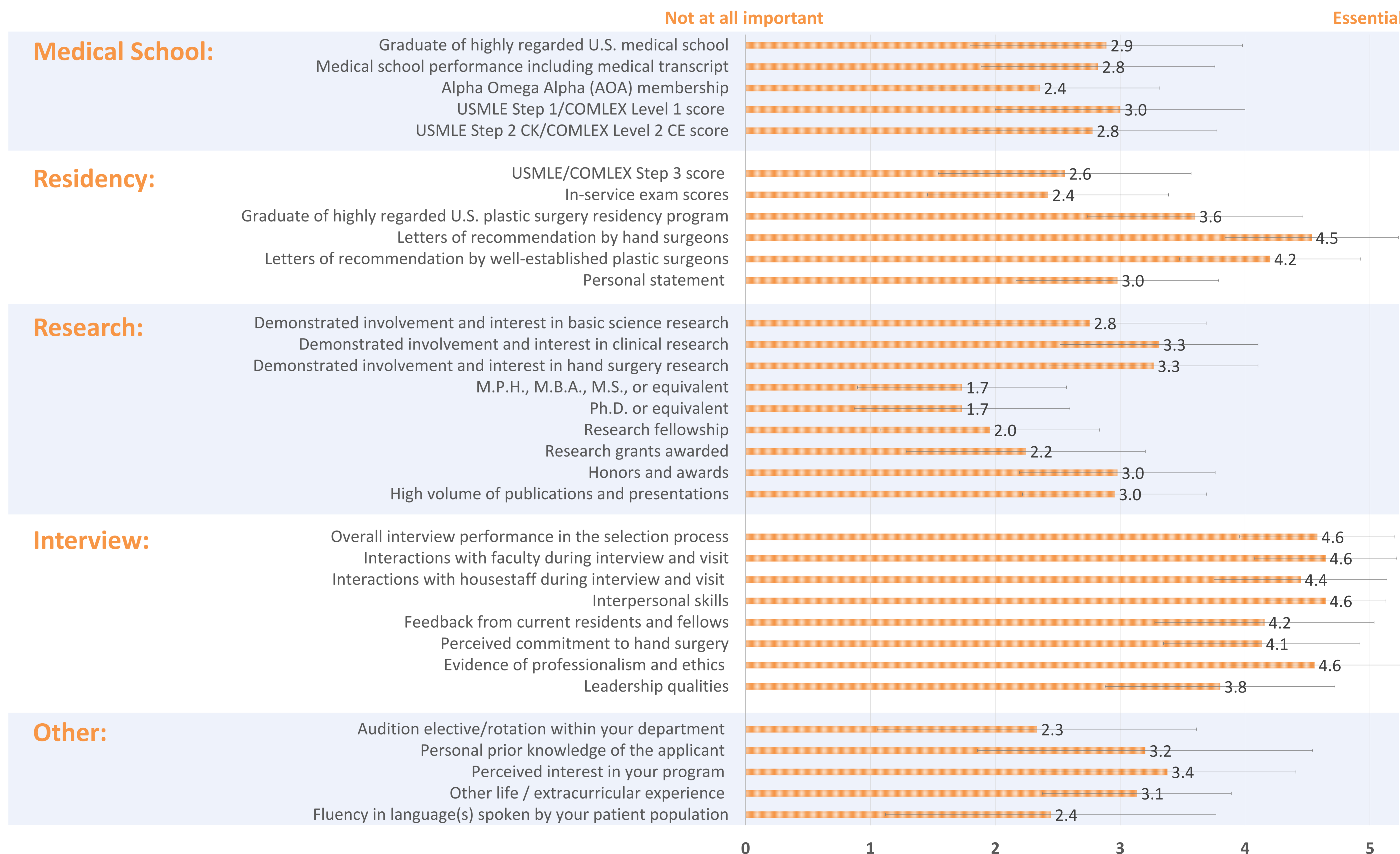


Results

Most important factors: interpersonal skills, interactions with faculty during interview and visit, evidence of professionalism and ethics, overall interview performance in the selection process, and letters of recommendation from hand surgeons.

Least important factors: Ph.D or equivalent, MPH, MBA, MS or equivalent, research fellowship, research grants awarded, and fluency in language(s) spoken by your patient population.

Factors that have a negative impact: visa requirement, candidate planning to practice in the same city as the fellowship, and graduate of a foreign medical school.



Conclusions

This study provides data on hand surgery program directors' perception of the criteria important for fellowship applicant selection. The most valued criteria appear to be interpersonal skills, interview performance, and letters of recommendation.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all the fellowship directors who took the time to answer our survey, and help us to collect data important to future hand surgery fellows and fellowship directors.

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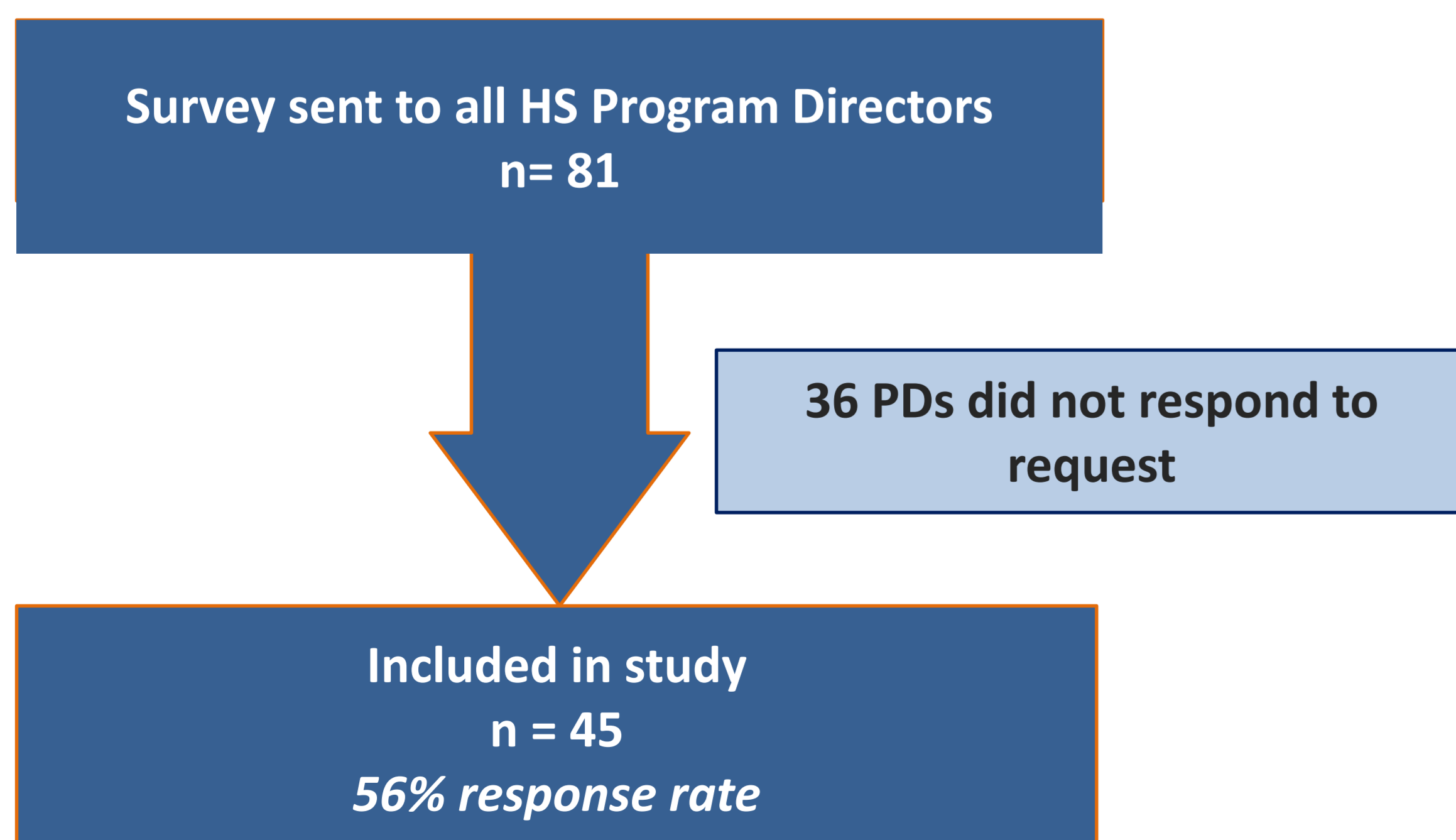
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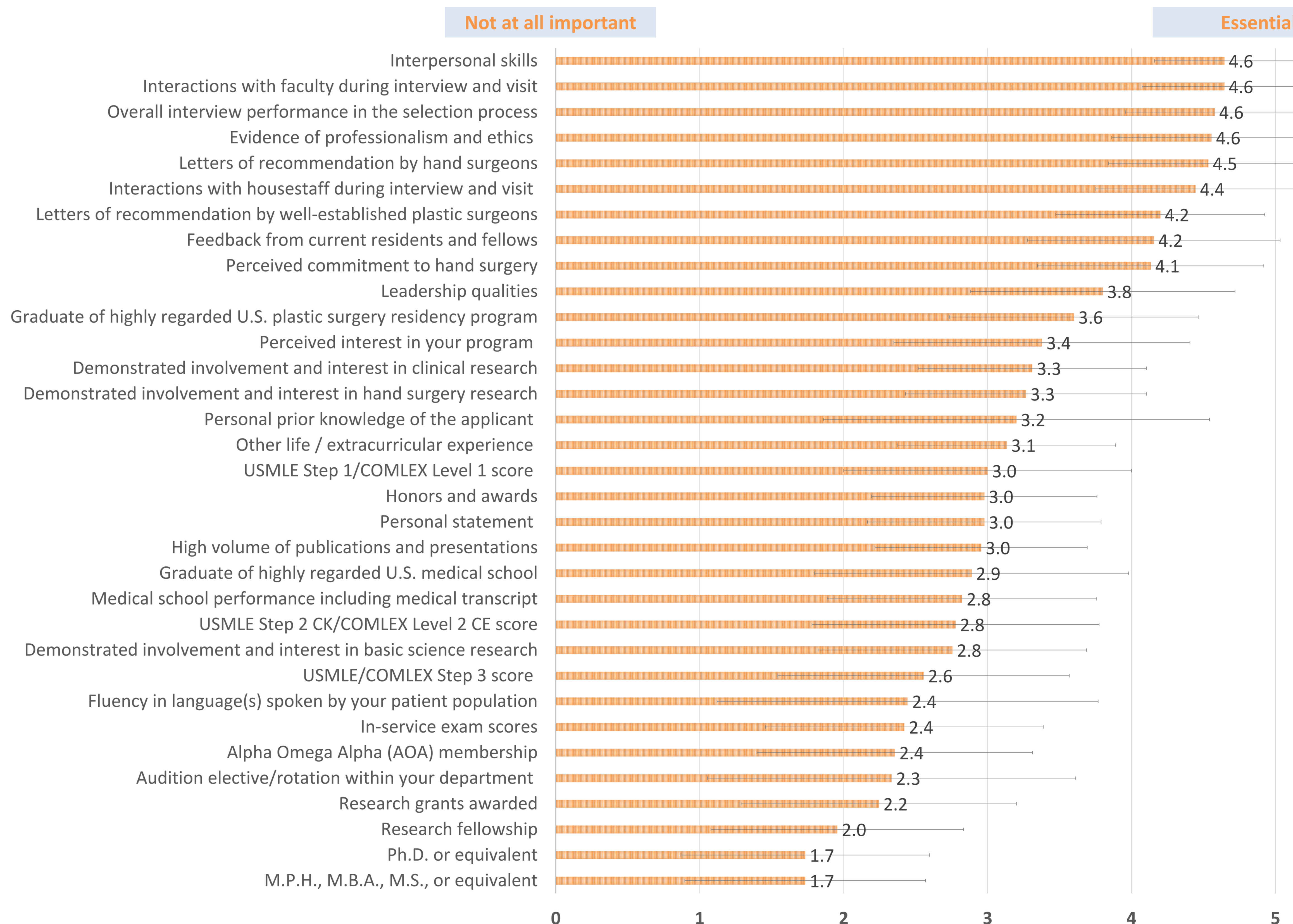


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